

ecology and environment, inc.

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International Specialists in the Environment

SCREENING SITE INSPECTION REASSESSMENT

SUBMITTED TO:

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EPA Region IX

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DATE:

June 15, 1990

SITE:

Foremost-McKesson, Inc. McKesson Chemical Company 9005 Sorensen Avenue

Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

TDD#:

F9-9002-014

EPA ID#:

CAD060395753

PROGRAM ACCOUNT#: FCA0243SAA

FIT REVIEW/CONCURRENCE:

Karen Sadd 6/18/90.

cc: FIT Master File

Don Plain, California Department of Health Services

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX, has tasked Ecology and Environment, Inc.'s Field Investigation Team (FIT) to reassess all sites with completed Screening Site Inspections (SSI) in the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) database that are still being considered for further action. The strategy for determining whether these SSIs actually merit further action is based primarily on each site's potential to achieve a score high enough on the proposed revised Hazard Ranking System (rHRS) for inclusion on the National Priorities List (NPL). This strategy is intended to identify those sites posing the highest relative risk to human health or the environment. All other sites needing remedial or enforcement follow-up will be referred to the states or an appropriate federal authority. Actions and involvement by authorities other than the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) will also be considered.

hb/fm/si-re

SUMMARY

The Foremost-McKesson, Inc., site is located at 9005 Sorensen Avenue in Santa Fe Springs, Los Angeles County, California. It occupies 3 acres of land in an industrialized area, south of the Southern Pacific railroad tracks (1).

Foremost-McKesson operated a chemical reformulation and distribution facility at the site from 1976 to 1986. Virgin chemicals were stored in 20 underground tanks and an aboveground tank farm. Two waste streams were generated at the facility. Corrosive wastes from drum rinsing operations were pumped, at a rate of 1,500 gallons per day, to an on-site neutralization pit, and later discharged to the Los Angeles County sanitary sewer. The 55-gallon drums were then sent to a drum recycler. Isopropyl alcohol was used to flush the solvent lines. The wastes were stored in drums in a designated hazardous waste storage area on site and later disposed of off site (1).

Foremost-McKesson has not operated at the site since 1986. The California Department of Health Services (DOHS) is currently overseeing the closure of the facility. The tanks, underground and aboveground have been emptied, and the contents were disposed of off site. The drums have been transported off site (2).

Several apparent problems can be identified at the site. A 10,000-gallon spill of sulfuric acid occurred in 1979 in the tank farm area as the result of a faulty tank valve. Additional chemical spills occurred in the tank farm area in 1977, 1978, and 1980. However, the specific chemicals involved are not known to FIT. Although the tank farm area is bermed, it sits on gravel rather than pavement. Results of 1984 DOHS soil sampling efforts indicated that surface soils in the tank farm area were contaminated with up to 33 parts per million (ppm) tetrachloroethene. In 1985, DOHS soil sampling in the same area detected 100 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) of acetone. Also, trichloroethane, methyl ethyl ketone, p-dioxane, tetrachloroethane, and xylene were detected in soil samples, however the concentrations are unknown to FIT The results of a 1989 DOHS sampling effort indicate that trichloroethane at 0.11 mg/kg and tetrachloroethene at 0.5 mg/kg are still present in surface soils (2,4). In 1980, the Los Angeles County Engineers issued a violation to Foremost-McKesson for an observed discharge of industrial waste to an unlined ditch behind the property. The ditch receives surface water runoff from the site via a 2-foot by 2-foot by 4-foot concrete catch basin (1).

The site is located in the Montebello Forebay area of the Central Basin, which is located in the Coastal Plain of Los Angeles County. The area is underlain in order of increasing depth by the Artesia, Gardena, Lynwood, Silverado and Sunnyside aquifers. According to a California Department of Water Resources report, these aquifers consists of mostly clay and gravel and are interconnected within 2 miles of the site (5).

The Bellflower aquitard, which exists just below ground surface, is approximately 20 to 40 feet thick and pinches out within 2 miles northwest of the site. It consists of clay and sandy clay. However,

percolation throughout the Bellflower aquitard is high, rendering it ineffective as a barrier to flow (5).

The nearest drinking water well is located 0.33 miles north of the site (1). It is perforated at 200 to 288 feet and 300 to 900 feet in the Silverado and Sunnyside aquifers (6). The well is part of an interconnected system of wells in the Santa Fe main system which serves a predominantly commercial area. During the day, approximatly 100,000 workers and residents use the drinking water, and at night approximately 10,000 residents use the water (7). A City of Norwalk well is approximately 2.5 miles south of the site, which serves 2,200 people (8). Southern California Water Company has a well approximately 2 miles south of the site, which serves a population of 7,000 (9). Both of these wells tap the Silverado and Sunnyside aquifers. The total population served by wells within 4 miles of the site is approximately 109,200.

Groundwater flow is toward the southeast (1). The annual net precipitation is 3.15 inches (10,11).

In 1989, TCE was detected at 2.8 milligrams per liter (mg/l), in the nearest Santa Fe Springs municipal well, 0.33 miles hydraulically upgradient of the site, by the Sante Fe Springs Department of Public Works. Well testing three months later detected no contamination present (12).

The potential for release to groundwater is high, given inadequate containment of hazardous substances, a depth to groundwater of 57 feet bgs, and the moderate permeability of geologic materials in the area. Some of the hazardous substances on site that are, or were, available for release to groundwater, and are highly toxic and mobile in groundwater, include methyl ethyl ketone, p-dioxane, acetone, trichloroethane, and toluene.

Storm runoff from the site flows to a concrete catch basin (2-foot by 2-foot by 4-foot), which has a locking gate valve to control release to an unlined ditch which parallels the northern border of the property. This unnamed ditch drains into the Sorensen Avenue Drain approximately 0.5 miles from the site, and in 2.5 miles it joins La Canada Verde Creek. After approximately 5 miles downstream, it merges with Coyote Creek. In another 6 miles downstream, Coyote Creek empties into the San Gabriel River (13,14). The 2-year, 24-hour rainfall in this area is 3 inches (15).

A potential exists for a release to surface water based on inadequate containment and the proximity of the site to surface water. Hazardous substances available for a release to surface water include acetone and trichloroethane, which are highly toxic and are persistant in rivers (2).

The facility claimed that it applied for an National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, however according to the NPDES database, it never received a permit (1,16).

Although a potential for a release to surface water exists, there are no drinking water uses along the surface water pathway within 15 miles

downstream of the site. There does not appear to be any fishing or recreational uses along the surface water pathway, as it is used for wastewater runoff (17).

However, there are some sensitive environments within 15 miles downstream of the site. Habitat for the southwestern pond turtle (Clemmys marmorata pallida) appears to be located within 15 miles downstream of the facility, yet its exact location is suppressed. The San Diego horned lizard (Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei) is found near the San Gabriel River. Both of these species are candidates for the federal endangered species list. The salt marsh bird's beak (Cordylanthus maritimus subspecies Maritimus) is a federal designated endangered species and can be located near Coyote Creek (18).

All the aboveground tanks and underground tanks are currently empty. However, spills have occurred at the tank farm area. Currently, the soil at the aboveground tank farm area is contaminated with tetrachloroethene and trichloroethane. These contaminants are highly mobile in air and may potentially be released to the air pathway from the soil.

There are approximately 222,121 residents within 4 miles of the site (18). The area is both commercial and industrial, with orchards as close as 3 miles away. Within 4 miles of the site are habitats for the southwestern pond turtle (Clemmys marmorata pallida), San Diego horned lizard (Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei), and the California orcutt grass (Orcuttia californica), all of which are candidates for the federal endangered species list. The later and the bank swallow (Ripara ripara), which are found in this range also, are candidates for the state endangered species list (18).

There are no employees presently working at the facility. It is fenced and inaccessible to the public (2). The site is located within an industrialized zone, with surrounding residential areas (1). Within 1 mile of the site, it is estimated that the residential population is 6,397 (19). Tetrachloroethane, methyl ethyl ketone and p-dioxane are contaminants which have been detected in the soil on site and are highly toxic.

OTHER AUTHORITY INVOLVEMENT

On November 18, 1980, the facility submitted a Notification of Hazardous Waste Activities to the EPA. The facility is a RCRA regulated large quantity generator of hazardous wastes and a treatment, storage, and disposal facility (TSDF). An interim Hazardous Waste Facility Permit was issued by DOHS on March 3, 1981. The final RCRA permit for the storage of process-driven wastes in drums was issued in October 1984 and expired in October 1989 (3,4).

DOHS is the state agency leading the investigation of the site. In 1988, DOHS conducted a site investigation at the facility and discovered that it had been closed since 1986. As a result, DOHS issued a violation to Foremost-McKesson for being an inactive facility without having gone through the closure procedure. In 1989, closure procedures began at the site. The Surveillance and Enforcement Division of DOHS is currently

certifying the closure of the storage tank area following RCRA regulations. Once that is completed, the rest of the facility will be investigated and remediated by the Site Mitigation Division of DOHS. A work plan is in progress, which will involve soil and groundwater sampling throughout the facility (2,4).

Foremost-McKesson is cooperating with DOHS to close the facility and is paying for the cleanup costs (2).

SUMMARY OF THRS CONSIDERATIONS

Foremost-McKesson, Inc., a nationwide reformulator and distributer of inorganic and organic chemicals, operated a facility in Santa Fe Springs, California, from 1976 to 1986. The facility had a RCRA permit for a treatment, storage, and disposal facility. Chemical spills have been reported in the area of the aboveground, gravel-lined tank farm, and soil contamination has been documented. The Los Angeles County Engineer has also cited Foremost-McKesson for discharging into a ditch behind the facility. Additionally, the facility had 20 single-lined, underground storage tanks which held virgin chemicals with no leak detection system. Currently, the California Department of Health Services (DOHS) is investigating the facility and conducting remediation activities at the site. The DOHS Surveillance Unit is in the process of closing the storage area under RCRA, and afterwards, the DOHS Site Mitigation Unit will close the rest of the facility.

The significant rHRS factors associated with the site are as follow:

- o Large waste quantity;
- o Distance to the nearest drinking water well is 0.33 miles;
- o Groundwater within 4 miles of the site serves a large population;
- o Large population within 4 miles of the site;
- o High potential for documented release to groundwater, surface water and air.

EPA RECOMMENDATION		
	Initial	Date
No Further Remedial Action Planned (NFRAP)	*	
Low-priority LSI (1LSI)	- egd	9/10/90
Medium-priority LSI (mLSI)	<i>(</i>	
High-priority LSI (hLSI)		· .
Refer to Other Authority (R)		